

Matt Wilson | Creating business resilience as a chief legal officer | 6th May 2025

Emma Carroll..... 00:00:01

Welcome to the Business Leaders Voice podcast. I'm Emma Carroll, head of content here at Source and today we're going to be discussing creating business resilience as a chief Legal officer and I'm delighted to be joined by Matthew Wilson, who's Chief Legal Officer at Fremantle Big. Welcome to you, Matthew. Lovely to be here face to face with you in London today.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:00:20

Good morning, Emma. Absolutely brilliant to be here and thanks a lot for the invite.

Emma Carroll..... 00:00:23

Thank you. Matt, can you kick off by telling us a little bit about yourself and your career to date?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:00:29

Sure thing. Well, I live in the countryside west of London with my wife and three young daughters and a lively cocker spaniel called Holly, where we're just starting to navigate the teenage years and that's with the daughters rather than the dog. As Chief Legal Officer, I lead the global legal and business affairs functions at Fremantle. If the listeners aren't aware, Fremantle is a global content producer, one of the biggest ones outside of the United States, often referred to as one of the super indies. And we make everything across drama and film, entertainment documentaries. So if you've ever watched American Idol or Britain's Got Talent, the Apprentice, we make all of those shows as well as dramas like the Responder and Night Sleeper. Like many senior legal leaders today, I wear a variety of non legal hats too, including looking after the tech and AI operations of the Fremantle business more broadly, as well as areas like sustainability and compliance.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:01:34

Before Fremantle, I spent six years leading the EMEA and APAC legal teams at Uber, four of those living in Amsterdam with the family, which was, was wonderful and at Uber really helping to, to stabilize and grow the business across over 40 jurisdictions and that includes launching and scaling Uber rides that everyone knows. Uber eats jump bikes, which is now line bikes and you see them racing around all over London, have to kind of dodge them when you're crossing the road and, and things like Uber Freight and that culminated in the successful IPO of, of Uber in 2019. And I love my time there. But prior to, prior to uber I was 6 years working for the global telco Telefonica with an enjoyable spell at Arsenal Football Club in, in the middle for a couple of years. And I started my legal career here in, here in the city of London at Baker and Mackenzie.

Emma Carroll..... 00:02:29

Wonderful. I'm hoping we might be able to pull out some of those stories as we go through. Sounds fantastic. And if we home in for a moment on the media and entertainment industry, what would you say the big trends and maybe the big challenges around today.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:02:42

Yeah, so I call out two Major challenges. The first is the confluence between the advent of the streaming platforms over the last decade, so Netflix, Disney, Amazon, Apple and so on. And at the same time you have some pretty disruptive black swan events like Covid, the war in Ukraine and global economic issues, macroeconomic issues like inflation that has obviously affected the cost of living. And that process, taking the first one. The process of moving from broadcast to streaming accelerated during COVID We were all sat at home watching tons and tons of content. And it meant that demand for content and the type of thing that a Fremantle produces was at an all time high. Referred to in our industry as peak tv, which if we're honest with ourselves, distorted the market in reality because it meant that whatever anyone was making would get sold and sold for really good money.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:03:39

But with post Covid, with rising inflation, the cost of living crisis that we've all lived through, the consumption patterns of audience viewing changed. It meant that content budgets from all of the major customers, whether they were streamers or whether they're traditional broadcast ad funded like ITV, Channel 4 and then the BBC which is taxpayer funded, changed and those budgets rationalized. Because if you think about it, it's only natural people aren't going to pay for seven to ten different streaming services.

But what happened at the same time accelerated by Covid, was that there was a change in viewer behavior from viewers migrating from linear broadcast to on demand streaming. And that can mean Netflix, but it can also mean things like YouTube. So I don't know about you Emma, but my kids spend just as much time on YouTube, if not more than they do watching Netflix or the BBC or ITV.

Emma Carroll..... 00:04:37

Yeah, I must admit I've gone down a YouTube hole myself recently.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:04:42

It's an easy hole to go down, that's for sure. And they make it that way and it is addictive. But there's a very different set of economics that sit behind YouTube for content producers like us. And so from a freemantle point of view, we've had to stay at the top of our game to continue to be able to sell our shows and generate the revenue and the profit that we're targeting. And viewing habits are important in that. But we also have had to consider the needs of our customers and the changing market dynamics.

Emma Carroll..... 00:05:15

And has that moved back at all or did it go all the way to streaming platforms and hasn't reverse back to pre pandemic?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:05:21

I don't think there's been much reversal. Yeah, I think once the pandemic had happened it accelerated that that change, especially demographically where we see younger Audiences are wanting to access their content in, on different platforms in different ways. So whether that's social media, TikTok, Snapchat, through to, through to YouTube, but also then, then accessing platforms like Netflix and, and they, they use different devices, it isn't always sitting in the living room on a Saturday night watching a big tv. They'll be on mobile devices and consuming their content in lots of different ways.

Emma Carroll..... 00:05:57

Yeah, thank you. And second trend you're going to.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:06:00

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. So the second challenge that's come in the last couple of years, we think back to November 2022 and ChatGPT came onto the, came onto the scene. The advent of AI and how that applies to our industry is, is a, is a big challenge and an opportunity at the same time. And we're starting to include AI driven workflows into how we make our content. And part of my role is to help the business navigate how we do that in a way that captures the opportunity, but that is also safe for the business and our customers. And there's lots of different aspects of that, such as who owns the rights when you're using AI, both the rights going into the AI tool and the rights coming out of the AI tool where AI is being used in the production process. Are we doing so in a way that's transparent, traceable, auditable?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:06:57

Are customers going to accept that AI is used in their content? Different organizations have different risk philosophies around and ethical philosophies around the usage of AI, especially in the content industry. And part of my role is to make sure that we're using the correct tools creatively, but also tools that our buyers are going to accept in a way that the buyers are comfortable with and that the kind of broader set of stakeholders are comfortable with too.

Emma Carroll..... 00:07:26

Do you have a feel for how much of your time is spent working around things around AI at the moment?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:07:32

That's a very good question. I was reflecting on the other day and how my role has changed in the last two or three years because of the advent of AI, both on the legal and non legal side. I think it's an increasing amount of time that is spent dealing with AI and AI related issues. I'd say not quite 50%.

Emma Carroll..... 00:07:52

Okay.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:07:52

But that's not far off. It's a big proportion.

Emma Carroll..... 00:07:55

Yeah. Because we're not coming to an end, are we? It's like you're going to have to be looking at it all the time as it evolves.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:08:00

As it evolves, exactly right. And the benefit of adopting AI is going to be greater in some things that we do than others. So for example, in drama and film, which can be special effects and visual effects heavy, those tasks can be capable of being done much more quickly and much more cheaply than they would have been in the past. When we establish a use for any AI tools, we apply our governance framework to decide if usage of that tool is appropriate for the task. So it's one thing putting something up on YouTube that can easily take down, it's quite another including a bit of AI work in something that we're doing for say a big streaming customer. The governance framework reflects our risk appetite when it comes to AI and that risk appetite of Fremantle is to be forward leaning in terms of the use of the technology while continuing to respect rights holders being transparent about where AI has been used. And the kind of North Star that we operate to is that any usage of AI should start and end with a human.

Emma Carroll..... 00:09:11

Okay, interesting. Okay. And that risk framework you're talking about, is that a bespoke risk framework purely for AI or does that fit in with your overall corporate risk framework?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:09:20

Yeah, I think it reflects the overall corporate risk philosophy which is to, to push and make sure that we're not overly conservative. But we do absolutely have a bespoke decision making matrix and risk framework for, for AI and how we use AI within the organization. And a good example of, of that kind of risk approach in action is that last week we, we announced the creation of our first AI driven production label Imagine A Studios. And you know, We've already seen YouTube creators and the volume of content that that produces. As AI increases the ability to generate even larger volumes of content, a higher level of quality, we're going to see an increase in the competition for people's eyeballs generally. And it's already at a high level today as we, as we said. And

it means that the stories that we tell across entertainment, drama and film documentaries can be nothing less than compelling.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:10:18

So what imaginee is going to do, it's going to like I say, be AI driven, AI led as a label and in terms of ways of creating content and then we'll look at different ways of distributing that content. So do we go digital first? Is it, is it more social media driven? And that experimentation and exploration of the technology will hopefully accelerate our AI adoption with, in the broader business too.

Emma Carroll..... 00:10:45

Amazing. And without giving away any secrets, just so I can imagine it, what kind of things do you think will be on there?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:10:51

Yeah, so we've seen a good example of a trend within the industry and I don't know if you've been onto X, formerly known as Twitter recently and seen there's quite a lot of advertising around micro dramas. So these are dramas where the narratives aren't, aren't particularly kind of high end or artistic. They're fairly basic storylines. But you are, they're very, extremely popular. We're seeing traction in some of the microdrama companies coming out of China, like real shorts where they're getting 100 million views and so on and so forth. Now that kind of volume, you're able to generate advertising revenue and micropayments revenue you at a level which is very interesting.

Emma Carroll..... 00:11:38

Fascinating. I'm going to keep my eye out for all of that, thank you. And I wanted to move in to chatting really specifically about resilience now and you kindly talked us through your cv. So many interesting businesses across very different sectors as well, which is quite unusual in the business leaders I speak to you to have been in so many different sectors. So what would be the common elements of business resilience that you, you've been delivering?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:12:03

Sure, I think there's, there's two really Emma. So the first is keeping the business operating. So what, whatever happens, making sure that you retain your license to operate and that license to operate, it may be, it may be regulatory, it may be political, it could be commercial. Do you have the license to operate from your, from your customer base? Are you still popular? Is there still demand for your products all the way through to quite literally the operational and legal means of keeping your business running? So that's the first and then I think the second on resilience is managing crisis and reputation.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:12:50

When we think about managing crisis and reputation, it really is working with the different teams across the business to make sure that we're managing the long term reputation of the business even though there may be short term considerations and demands because of events that happen, as they all do to any business.

Emma Carroll..... 00:13:10

Matt, I was really interested when you were talking about having the license to operate because there are so many kind of things flying around in that ether at the moment. There's so many kind of maybe conflicting views. So there might be political players that might not be happy with certain views, there might be maybe specialist groups who might be no platforming people who are talking about things that they don't want to be talked about. So it's just so many tensions and difficult things to navigate. Does that impact the, the media and entertainment industry? And is that something you have to consider?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:13:43

Yeah, it's absolutely something that we need to keep in our minds when, when thinking about what we make and how we make it. But, but at a principles level at Fremantle, there are very few red lines as to what we would consider making. So for example, some of those red lines might be pornography. Anything that impacts, anything that demonstrates kind of violence towards children. Anything illegal of course, but what's illegal in one place may not be illegal in another. And we're, we're very much open to telling all stories and open to all storytellers finding free matter. One of our things that we talk about a lot is a place where the all creatives can, can call home.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:14:31

And so almost irrespective of your kind of political views, political leanings, we want to be able to tell compelling stories. And, and that's very much where we come from. Now whether we're able to then distribute and put all content into all jurisdictions around the world, that's a different question of course. And there are some places where some of the things that we have made in the last few years. For example, we made a movie with Daniel Craig called *Queer* that was critically very well received. It was in cinemas at the back end of 2024. That is not a piece of content that could be displayed and distributed everywhere in the world because of the nature of the story that it tells. At Fremantle, we believe that freedom of speech, freedom of expression is, is paramount and should really be the North Star that we, that we work towards.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:15:25

Now there are, there can be legal and regulatory restrictions in different countries around the world that impact on that, but that's certainly the starting place.

Emma Carroll..... 00:15:35

Yeah. And maybe if people don't have the support of chief legal officers and that kind of thing, it actually makes you less creative because you wouldn't be feel safe to push these boundaries.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:15:45

Yeah, I think, I think that is probably right. Where if you do have access to good legal advice and where, where you're able to as a lawyer you're able to work with the business to say add actually this is okay to do it in this way rather than not do it at all or not tell that story. Let's do it in this way to make it, make it safe. And we've got a few projects coming up this year that required that kind of, that kind of thought process.

Emma Carroll..... 00:16:15

Really interesting. And I guess you're pushing the boundary, being creative but listening. I think you're also creating a safe space for creatives.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:16:23

Yes.

Emma Carroll..... 00:16:23

To express ourselves.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:16:24

Yeah, that's a lovely way of putting it.

Emma Carroll..... 00:16:26

So talking about crises, do you have a sort of meaty example you could share with us there?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:16:31

Yeah, absolutely. Well, there are plenty that I can't talk about and frankly, whenever you have human beings in close proximity with each other, often in pressurized situations, whether on a film set, a tech company or putting people together in a car, the reality is that people don't always behave correctly and things happen. And I think the biggest learning is expect the unexpected and don't make assumptions that you don't test. But one that I can talk about is when Russia invaded Ukraine, we were in the middle of shooting a movie called Limonoff on the ground in Moscow and there were some pretty high profile talent involved in, in that production. We had to make an immediate call whether it was safe to continue filming. The diplomatic situation was highly uncertain. Airlines were stopping flying between, between the UK and Russia almost immediately.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:17:22

We ended up having to get people out of via Dubai and then figure out the broader business impact and, and that broader impact included. Okay, where do we set up production to finish this, finish this movie? But more broadly, Russia was a really good market for our content. And with sanctions coming in, we, we then had to work through not only what we could do legally, but what we should do. And as a baseline of Fremantle, we make sure that we comply with the sanctions.

Emma Carroll..... 00:17:52

Yeah, I do remember at that time there was a lot of publicity about different businesses, whether they stay, whether they pull out. And some took a long, long time to make that decision, didn't they?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:17:59

They did and we made that decision pretty quickly and it really was one of my, I hadn't been at Fremantle for too long at that stage and it was one of the times that really demonstrated the, the power of having a close knit exec team where there are high levels of trust between us all.

Emma Carroll..... 00:18:19

Okay, thank you. And you talked there about the critical partners in the organisation and who the people are who really help you deliver on resilience. Are there any particular pivotal people or teams that you would pull out that are really important to you?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:18:36

Absolutely. Like we were saying, Emma, I think it goes back to culture. Tone is definitely set at the top with our brilliant CEO at Fremantle, Jen Mullen, as well as the rest of the global leadership team. And the culture has to be that everyone has a personal responsibility to keep the business resilient, to peer around corners and to look for what the next unexpected event could be. But also that good ideas can come from anywhere. And the key is that as leaders we stay open to those good ideas regardless of where they come from and resist that trap of believing that the way that we may have done something for the last 10, 15, 20 years, will work for the next 10, 15, 20 years. Because that's, that's simply a fallacy is that's, that's not going to be true.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:19:21

And if you try and believe that, you kind of lying to yourself, which is irresponsible to, to the organization and to its people. Short term in terms of those, those partners that, the resiliency in a short term crisis, often. And comms, legal, hr, if there's a people issue, senior leadership, often the finance teams too, if you've got something like a fraud going on. But longer term, building resiliency is for me working with the strategy teams, the broader business finance teams, ensuring that our people teams are putting in place the right training and learning and development for the direction the world is going in. We've, we've talked about AI, of course, so that our people have the skills and

perspectives that they need for the future. And trust is key to resilience. Regardless of whether your customers, our consumers, are an organization like Uber or a company like Fremantle, do you have the level of trust that's needed or is your product so indispensable that you can make a mistake either with your customers or, you know, whether consumers or businesses and bounce back from it? And that is about relationships.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:20:33

Uber, for example, had a variety of controversies in its early days, including around whether something like drivers are freelancers or are they workers. And that's a, I think that's a really good example of resiliency. You know, drivers being workers is something that we planned for and when it became clear that they were going to be legally regarded as workers. It's something that as a business we, we lent into and when we, when we first spoke, you, you raised this as an example. It was a really good one that the, the marketing that Uber, Uber does then changed to something like, well, one person in this car gets pension contributions, holiday pay and sick pay and it's the driver and, and therefore it's trying to build trust that the choice you make when you get into, you use Uber to, to get around, you're making a good choice because they, we do the right thing by the drivers.

Emma Carroll..... 00:21:26

Yeah. So definitely a great example of a risk being turned into an opportunity there.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:21:30

Absolutely.

Emma Carroll..... 00:21:30

Yeah. We've talked about quite a few of the ways that you enable businesses to be resilient, but I'm wondering, is there anything else we haven't chatted about yet that takes up quite a bit of your time at Fremantle in terms of enabling resilience?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:21:42

Yeah. Sure thing. So any good lawyer, I think starts with a definition. So let's think about what resilience really, really means. And in preparation for thinking about the

conversation today, I went and had a look. So the ability to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions and I think together with the rest of the exec and the leadership team around the world at Fremantle, that's the job. When it comes to resources, resiliency, how are we able to withstand or recover quickly from, from events, whether they are expected or unexpected?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:22:19

How do you create a business and organization that withstand shocks and adapt quickly to the world that changes around it? And the world has certainly been changing around all of us for probably the best part of a decade now in an ever more rapid way. And that falls into, for me, that falls into two buckets. So they're external things, external factors that are outside of our control. And for that we can think about tariffs coming out of the us, AI, the war in Ukraine, the macroeconomic environment that we're operating in, changing tastes and changing consumer behaviors aren't necessarily within our control. We then have to react to that in terms of the content that we produce and how we make it and the, the business decisions that our customers make. So when our big customers, a lot of our big customers made a decision to move away from their ad funded linear broadcast businesses to on demand platforms, that changes the environment for them as well. And we need to adapt to that too.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:23:21

We need to make sure that in terms of resilience, the business is diversified in terms of the customers, that we're not reliant on one or two customers, only the genres that we operate in. So that goes to changing tastes. And over the last five, six years at Fremantle, we were known for being an entertainment company with shows like Got Talent and X Factor, Family Feud, which is Family Fortunes in the uk. And that's still a huge part of our business. It's still very much the core of what we do. But we have diversified over, over, over time to have a big drama and film business. That's a huge component now of what we do, a large documentaries business. So as tastes wane and then come back again, we're in a position to, to produce the type of content that, that people want to see.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:24:13

The, the second thing is internal event things that are often within our control. So do we, do we produce a show in a good enough way so that it keeps getting commissioned again and again or does it become uncommissioned at one point in time? Do we have people internally? The misbehaving are our shows going over budget? Has there been incidents of fraud or health and safety accidents and things like that? And whether it's

internal events or external, external events, one of the most important things that goes to resilience and your ability to navigate those and withstand shocks and adapt quickly to a changing environment or changing events, is the culture that you have internally. And if you have a culture that is high levels of trust, high levels of collegiality, collaboration, transparency, you have a culture that is empathetic in a way where people understand when negative things or negative events happen, but very quickly bounce back from that and think, well, how can we solve this? How do we solve this together?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:25:26

How do you put together a diverse group of talents and skills to get to the right answer for the business and its people? And that's a huge thing. And part of any culture is setting the right expectations. And this is where I kind of pull my legal hat back on and go back to things like governance and policies and processes, because ensuring that we're getting those things right sets the expectations for the organization. So whether we're talking about how we handle personal data, how we work with AI that we've already talked, talked about what our policies are and our expectations are around behavior in the workplace, when it comes to harassment, discrimination, making sure that the correct speak up systems are in place, it creates resilience because when the expectations are clear, that becomes behavior and that becomes culture and it stops incidents before they happen. And ultimately you want people to always do the right, right thing when no one's looking.

Emma Carroll..... 00:26:31

Matt, when we spoke before, you talked about how important it is to be able to reframe risks and turn them into opportunities. And to be completely honest, that's something we hear quite a lot in business. I certainly hear it a lot from consultants. And I have to admit I write it quite a lot in articles I write. So it would be wonderful to sort of hear some really tangible examples of that that we can hear where you have done that. Do you have a couple you could share?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:26:54

Yeah, sure. Sure thing. I think one of the best examples is with, with AI and a big role that, that me and the team have had to play is trying to change people's perceptions of AI as something that is a threat to people's jobs, a threat to the industry, into an opportunity to be leaders, not just in AI, but in, in our industry on how, how we're approaching the new world that we're all going into. And with the philosophy very much

being that there's a Much bigger chance of it affecting people's jobs or being an existential threat to the company if we don't know how to leverage AI. So the more we can do to get our teams working with AI, upskill themselves and be ready for the new world that we're going to be all living and working in, the better chance that we have of being successful and thriving in the future. When we make risk decisions, we need to make sure that the business thinks about what it does if that risk becomes reality ahead of time, and that we always have optionality. And that's a big part of my role as CLO and of the rest of the legal team and of course the broader executive team as well.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:28:08

But all that said, you can do all the preparation in the world, but crises are always going to happen. You're always going to have unexpected events and when you do have those, those events or those crises hit, part of my role is very much to ensure that together with our teams around the world, we're equipped to roll up our sleeves and deal with them as they come. And when they, when they do happen, I always say, or always like that, one of the first calls should always be to me or one of the relevant heads of legal around the world. And I've lost count of the number of times over the last decade, whether it's at Uber or here at Fremantle, where there's been a late night or early morning call that you weren't expecting. And when that happens, we figure out together what we do for the long term health of the business and its people. Crises are rarely purely legal in nature, so it often involves having close partnerships across the business to navigate them effectively and efficiently. And that of course involves teams like hr comms, broader business teams, finance, and increasingly, given the direction of the world and the types of crisis that we, we see, it quite often involves the technology teams that we have as well in terms of IT security and so on and so forth.

Emma Carroll..... 00:29:22

Really interesting. Sounds like you might have a special red telephone in your house that rings at night and in the morning.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:29:28

So this is certainly something like that. Yeah.

Emma Carroll..... 00:29:31

And yeah, and we have talked about AI throughout this conversation, but I'm wondering, is there anything else you'd pull out about how AI is really influencing your role or maybe adding extra risks? Anything we haven't chatted about there?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:29:45

I think one of the biggest risks for, for any organization when, when you have technological change is, and we certainly see this with AI, is just the proliferation of, of data and give a, give a few examples of that on the one hand, it's both creation of data and access to data. So creation of data. You know, we're doing this podcast today. It's being recorded. I know now, I know today that across our business, across the world, people will be having hundreds, if not thousands of teams calls. And some of those teams calls because of AI and how convenient it is now has functionality where those calls can be recorded, those recordings will be stored somewhere. And I think we can all agree that when you're having a verbal conversation, it is less formal than when you are committing things to writing, especially over email and text and so on.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:30:48

Um, but those recordings are no less discoverable in court processes and than, than an email or a text message. And so what we do with that volume, additional volume of information, is something that we, we spend a lot of time thinking about. And so for example, you create, do you, do you store forever the verbatim of a call? Probably not. But you, you get it down to a summary, a summary that's been checked and verified, and then that summary gets stored. And if that doesn't happen, then, then everything just gets deleted. And so the creation is one thing, access is another. So Whether it's Copilot ChatGPT, the ability of those tools to access corporate data more broadly if you don't have the right access controls in place, is pretty deep.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:31:42

And that's, that's a big issue for any organization around the world.

Emma Carroll..... 00:31:46

Definitely. Thank you. And in terms of our audience, we have a lot of senior leaders in consulting listening to the podcast. I know that when we chatted previously, you said that working with the best consultants was like a partnership. What does that look and feel like for you?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:32:02

Yeah, sure. I mean, we recently worked with one of the big consultants on a two month project. And when it comes to what it feels like, when it works well and that partnership is thriving, it very much feels like they are part of your team for that period of time and you establish trust pretty quickly. Both sides have to come in from an open mindset, not thinking that you know everything because you're in your business day to day and that the consultants know nothing. But at the same time, you want the consultants to be curious, to be inquisitive and not just be applying a cookie cutter approach to your business. The great thing with working with McKinsey recently is that they came in with ideas. Those ideas weren't fixed.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:32:47

They didn't put us in predetermined boxes, but we worked together as partners to figure out together the answers to the questions that we'd set ourselves, which was all around future business strategy and, and where we go from here, given how much the world has changed in the last few years.

Emma Carroll..... 00:33:03

So you've got that insight coming in and you've got that relationship, but you've got expertise in your business so you're needed to have that conversation together. It needs to be that conversation with all that intelligence coming into it.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:33:15

Absolutely. It's like when you build any team, you may have specialists that are very deep within the business and we're, we have people at Fremantle who have been within the content business for 20 years plus. But then if you can mix those perspectives and that experience with fresh perspectives coming in from outside, it's a really powerful combination to help you navigate what the way forward for the business and the organization should look like.

Emma Carroll..... 00:33:49

Okay, what about the times where you've got less value from consultants? Why do you feel that happened in those circumstances?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:33:56

Yeah, I think typically it's usually where the consultants have preconceived answers to the, the exercise. They come in thinking that either they're going to apply what they, they know already or they, they have very specific ideas about the industry or the organization and it's difficult to move them from those. And you often see that it's a bit of a toss of a coin between whether a consultant will come in and say, okay, you need to cut 15, 20% of cost and kind of job done or where they take a different, more open minded approach, approach and actually we're really going to dive in and dig into to the business, understand what the fundamentals are and then build up from there to figure out what the right answer is for the business.

Emma Carroll..... 00:34:50

So you've seen both sides? Absolutely. Yeah. Okay, thank you. And a bit of a crystal ball question here. What consulting services do you think will be in demand over the next few years in your particular sector?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:35:04

AI transformation is broad, far and away the biggest one. The direction that technology is going in means the way that content can be made will be more uniform. And one of the things we need to consider is how we balance that almost commoditization of how you make something with maintaining the creativity and keeping creativity at the heart of what we do. So, so how you make something and what you make something, what you make are two different things and their creativity. And what, from my perspective, what AI should, should allow all of us to do is break down barriers to our imagination. And having that imagination translated into content AI should mean that those barriers come down significantly. So if you can imagine it you can put it on a screen screen.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:35:57

You can make content, you can realize it.

Emma Carroll..... 00:35:59

Okay, thank you. And we talked quite a bit earlier about business resilience. But I would also love to talk to you about personal resilience because it seems to me that Chief

Legal Officer is the kind of role that can be so stressful at times with people phoning that red phone in the, in the morning with big crises. So what do you do to main personally resilient?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:36:21

A whole variety of things. Things. I'm part of something called the General Counsel well being Network where we work with a doctor called Dr. Steven McGregor who is a professional psychologist, well being professional who I've worked with for years. And one of the things that Steven talks about that I've, I've used is a concept of habit hacking which involves doing, doing small things every day that make a difference to your, your well being and therefore your, your ability to be resilient. And that can be anything from when you get up, when you get up in the morning, looking outside before you look at your smartphone. It can be not sleeping with your smartphone next to you on the bedside table.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:37:11

It can be taking extra 10 minutes in the morning to walk to work from Waterloo Station rather than getting on the Northern Line and standing in close proximity to half of London all the way through. And then ultimately it involves building in non negotiables into your day regardless of what's going on around you at work. And for me that ranges from, from exercise to what I eat, but more than anything, protecting time with family and friends. And for years that was making sure that I'm at home to read our daughter's stories and put them to bed. Now they're teenagers, it means they're nearly always still awake anyway. But what, what it all, it all adds up to is meaning that you're in a much better frame of mind having done some of those things that matter to you and that help to control your stress levels and contribute to well being if you then need to get the laptop out again or be on calls late at night and, and so on. And it means you keep perspective and make what I think are better decisions in the end.

Emma Carroll..... 00:38:14

Okay, so that does allow you to, if you want, work the long hours and work out. Yeah. Because you've built those other bits into your day.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:38:21

Yes. Yeah, yeah.

Emma Carroll..... 00:38:22

Okay, thank you. And final question. We always like to end on a really, really practical takeaway. And I'm just thinking of the, the new Chief Legal officer maybe stepping into a new role, maybe a more senior this might be their first really senior role. They're going into a new company. From a resilience perspective, what is the big question they should ask about that company on the day they arrive?

Matthew Wilson..... 00:38:44

It's a great question. From a resilience point of view, it takes a village to manage any given crisis. So I think there are a few things, but the one that I would call out is for a general counsel getting clear as to who plays what role when any unexpected event happens, building those relationships with the rest of the leadership team to make sure and really from a resilience perspective, it does come down to relationship your ability to work together to figure out what your options are if events happen as the world changes around you. And I think for any general counsel, the clue is often in the title. So you are a general counsel for the business and to be able to impart the best council and be a sounding board for everyone, having the right relationships and building trust among the other members of the exec team and the business more broadly is really key.

Emma Carroll..... 00:39:51

Matthew Wilson, thank you so much for your time today. Fascinating conversation.

Matthew Wilson..... 00:39:55

My pleasure. Thanks for having me.

Emma Carroll..... 00:39:57

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